



THE CORD

www.slr-ofs.org

San Luis Rey Fraternity
of the Secular Franciscan Order
Mission San Luis Rey, Oceanside, CA.



Upcoming Gathering on April 8, 2018

Mass in the Serra Center at 10:00 AM
Community Prayer - St. Clare Chapel after Mass
Lunch is in the O'Keefe Lounge from Noon-1:00PM
General Meeting in the Luiseño Room from 1PM-3PM

Council Meeting scheduled after our general gathering 3:15-5pm

Future Meetings:

May 6, 2018, June 3, 2018, July 1, 2018 and Aug. 5, 2018, dates subject to change.



Fr. F. Fouq OFM

Notes from our minister

Dear brothers and sisters,

May the Lord give you peace. I pray that your Lent has been life-giving, and that your Easter will be life-celebrating.

Please join us **Sunday April 8, 1:00 pm** in the St. Clare Chapel as we receive our new Candidates. This is a solemn/joyful moment for all of us in San Luis Rey Fraternity!

Following tradition, the friars of San Luis Rey will renew their vows at Evening Prayer during the month of April. They invite us to join them and witness their renewal. If your schedule permits, you'd be most welcome. Details will follow.

Finally, I leave with the "praises" St. Francis composed after he returned from the Holy Land. They seem most suited to this time of year.

The Praises of God

You are the **holy** Lord God Who does **wonderful things**.

You are strong. You are great. You are the most high.

You are the almighty king. You *holy Father*,

King of *heaven and earth*.

You are three and one, the Lord God of gods;

You are the good, all good, the highest good,

Lord God *living and true*.

You are love, charity; You are wisdom, You are humility,

You are patience. You are beauty, You are meekness,

You are security, You are rest,

You are gladness and joy, You are our hope, You are justice,

You are moderation, You are all our riches to sufficiency.

You are beauty, You are meekness,

You are the protector, You are our custodian and defender,

You are strength, You are refreshment, You are our hope,

You are our faith, You are our charity,

You are all our sweetness, **You are our eternal life:**

Great and wonderful Lord, Almighty God, Merciful Saviour.

Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, vol. 1, p. 108.

Amen.

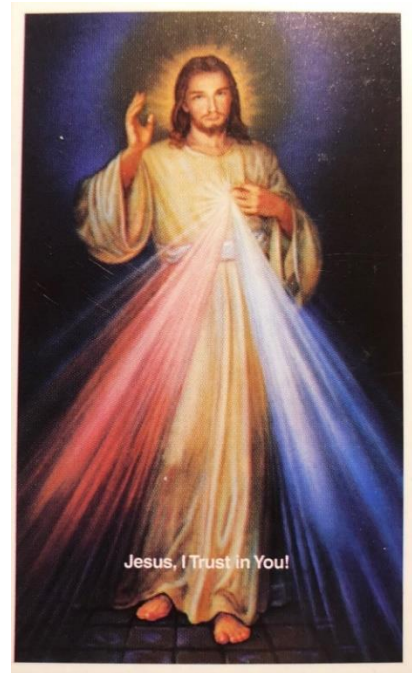
Peace and all good,

Donna

This month's theme:



Fresco in the monastery at Subiaco is believed to be the first portrait of Francis, created in his life time.



Carol OFS will be presenting the “Ongoing Formation” this month on St. Francis and Divine Mercy. Remember to bring your imaginations and Rosaries...

We will be praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy at 3:00 pm, in order to gain the indulgences attached to praying it, as our gathering is on Divine Mercy Sunday.



This is a statue of St. Francis bathing a leper, just imagine the courage it took to get this close and intimate to a person with what, at the time of St. Francis, was believed to be a highly contagious disease, and much less taking and tenderly kissing a leper's hands.

Learn more about this touching statue [here](#).



Gospel 8 Apr 2018 '[Mercy Sunday](#)' cycle "B" (NAB)

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel JN 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "**Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.**"

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "**My Lord and my God!**" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Open the Doors & Open our Hearts – The Gubbio Project

[Doug Pierce](#) of the [Gubbio Project](#) joined us at our March gathering via Skype. It was an incredible dialog – followed by energetic discussion about how we could also help the homeless:

- Michelle invited us to bring items for ‘Blessing Bags’ each month for the homeless
- Eileen invited us to bring in discount coupons for fast food restaurants each month
- Joe invited us to join him in serving at Br. Benno’s serving the homeless

Below is a song about the Gubbio project called ‘Open the Doors’ by Br. Al Mascia, OFM and Maggid Steve Klaper. It would seem from all that we discussed at our last gathering, that an open ‘door’ is a beautiful metaphor for an open *heart*.

Open the Doors (listen to the song [here](#))

*Some twenty years ago, in a car late, late at night
A Catholic priest and I waited at a traffic light
The Cathedral was on the left A McDonalds on the right
He asked, “What’s wrong with this picture?”
The Cathedral was locked up tight.*

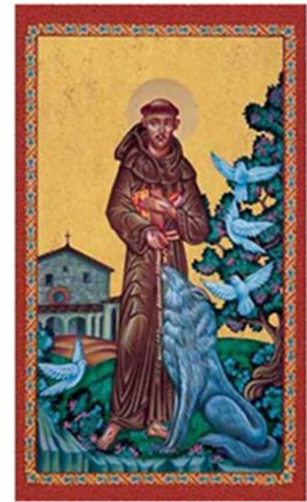
*Let’s open the doors... Let’s open the portals...
Let’s open our hearts even more!
Let’s open the doors... Let’s unlock each handle...
Let’s welcome inside the poor.*

*There’s a church in San Francisco where the pastor’s very brave.
He lets the homeless in each day and they sleep within the nave
The Mass goes on around them... The homeless dream away
They call it “Sacred Sleep” ... It’s Communion either way.*

*Let’s open the doors...
Fifth Avenue’s the place to live for the very well-to-do.
But thanks to Presbyterians the homeless sleep there too.
The City tried to make them send the homeless folk away
The City lost the judgment... the Gospel wins the day!
Let’s open the doors...*

*If Jesus wanted all of us to hide behind closed doors
To worship him protected from the presence of the poor
Why did he choose to hang around with those the world
abhorred? O, Jesus help our unbelief!... Our trust in you restore!*

- Learn More about the Gubbio Project here => <https://www.thegubbioproject.org/>
- Gubbio ‘The Days & the Hours’ video is here => <https://youtu.be/hqa4Dcw5sgw>
- Article about the United Nations report on extreme poverty in America => [here](#)



"Blessings in a Bag" for the Homeless

At our March gathering, Michelle invited us to join her in stuffing some baggies for our "Mission of Mercy" to the homeless who are so much in need. If you would like to participate going forward, please bring items to any future meeting to share.



~ Also from our March meeting - A Happy Note of Welcome ~
Please welcome our newly transferred members to SLR Fraternity,
Rock and Janice DeSpain



An Experience of Pilgrimage - Being Welcomed in Assisi

This place is different... after visiting the very cosmopolitan Rome and Florence, my husband and I scrambled off the train at the quiet platform in Assisi. Seeing a few others on the train platform on the brisk winter afternoon, Stephen said with a smile, '*Look! There's other pilgrims!*' By the specific grace of this place, we were no longer tourists... we were *pilgrims*.



With senses wonderfully overwhelmed with the baroque exuberance of Rome and the sublime Renaissance splendor of Florence, simple little Assisi was *different*; this town on a hill with deep Roman roots was decidedly *Medieval*. Once Assisi was a prosperous merchant town but was decimated by a plague in 1470. Afterwards, history seems to have passed it by.

I quickly learned what 'Hill Town' meant. It means the entire town is built in rock, cobblestone, and repurposed Roman structures into what feels like a medieval ski run with all sorts of steep little streets and back alleys. However, unlike an *actual* ski run there's no chairlift to get you back uphill. Assisi involves a *lot* of walking, somehow seemingly always *uphill*.

In Assisi we stayed with the Suore Francescane Di Gesu' Bambino (Franciscan Sisters of the Baby Jesus) at the Monastero S. Andrea. Shivering in the chill intensified by open spaces and a bit of altitude, we stood outside the tall stone medieval walls of the convent and pushed a call button, nervously trying to retrieve a few words of Italian from our shallow vocabulary reservoir. Although the intercom box remained silent, a large industrial safety light flashed at the top of the high wall, a mechanical latch released with a loud clang, and the massive door slowly swung open... into a surprisingly beautiful courtyard. This was no Florentine boutique hotel; but was a warm and welcoming place to call home for a few days.



This place was different; unlike accommodations in Rome or Florence, the room in the convent was reminiscent of an old school Catholic dorm room, made much more inviting once we pushed the twin beds cozily together. The only special request I had made when arranging for our stay was a was room with a 'pretty view.' When we arrived, Sister excitedly flung open the window to show us this =>



I gasped. Sister smiled broadly – there was no need for translate my surprised delight into *any* language. Being winter, we were the Sisters' only guests. And they ensured we were very well cared for, from thoughtful breakfasts, to lessons on the espresso machine, helpful Assisi advice... and *one magnificent view*. As far as things Franciscan, we were right in the middle of it all.



Just down the hall from our room was a chapel with large, dark, and seemingly ancient choir stalls along the back wall. Earlier, one of the sisters had invited us to their weekly Eucharistic Adoration. That evening, I entered the very simple chapel and settled unobtrusively in the back. As each sister walked in, there would be a surprised glance in my direction then a delighted smile. So much for 'unobtrusive.' I was delighted being able to hear the Sisters sing their prayer with such clear, bright, angelic voices – and happy to join the prayers in English when even in Italian they veered into recognizable territory. As generally occurs, the impact of prayer resonates beyond the time actually spent praying. In this case, it was in my relationship with the Sisters. For the rest of our stay, it now felt like I had at least half a dozen wonderful doting Italian grandmothers – complete with smiles, kisses, and hugs.



In Assisi, there is no photography allowed in *any* of the Franciscan churches; here churches are strictly a *religious* experience. I walked in (I have to admit) hoping to score some nice shots for the Cord & website. **Oh no.** The prohibition of photos communicated very effectively that... *'This place is different.'*



With so much time spent with Giotto and the art of the Basilica of St. Francis for our website, I felt I **knew** this place. Would it be like I imagined? As we entered into this space, I wanted to pause, take a breath, and see each and every fresco, each space, and prayerfully experience them *in situ* – in the context in which the artist intended.

After the death of Francis, the town of Assisi gifted the Friars land at the bottom of the hill for the Basilica. Since the hillside was not level, the Friars initially built a foundation of sorts – a lower church in the Romanesque style – very solid, supportive, perhaps a bit dark. On top of that, they built the soaring Gothic upper church that reaches magnificently heavenward, lit with the filtered light of the first stained glass windows in Italy. Beneath them both, underneath even the Lower church – seemingly like the underground wellspring of Franciscan spirituality, is the crypt of St. Francis himself, where his dear friend, Lady Jacoba is also interred.

Both upper and lower churches are packed full of stunning frescos. In those frescos, Giotto di Bondone and his fellow artists conveyed great theological concepts. Giotto, also being a Secular Franciscan, brought an especially personal feel to his picture-stories of Francis. He conveys deep emotion that until that point, had been missing from religious art. From an artistic perspective, Giotto's work in St. Francis's Basilica is the forerunner of the Renaissance that just a century later, was to be born in Florence.

I came back from Assisi with a new appreciation of not only days spent walking arm-in-arm with someone you love and savoring long, leisurely Italian dinners – but also with a deeper appreciation of my own Fraternity that entrusted me with their prayer intentions in these intensely Franciscan places. In each place, each Fraternity member and their intentions were held in prayer.

Even without travel, we do have some incredible Franciscan resources on our own website (www.slr-ofs.org). Since there is no photography allowed in these Franciscan holy places, our own [Art](#) page is very helpful in getting an idea of Giotto's art inside the Basilica of St. Francis. Go also to the [Resources](#) page on our [website](#) and scroll down to the bottom section, 'Franciscan Pilgrimages and Holy Places.' There I would highly recommend '[Spiritual Reflections on a Pilgrimage to Assisi](#)' by Bob Fitzsimmons, OFS. Please also check out the video by Rick Steve's that is also linked there, it's particularly nice (longer versions are on YouTube) as well as the live Assisi webcams and the webcam to +pray+ in real time at the crypt of St. Francis.

In future months, I hope to share additional reflections on Lady Jacoba, San Francisco a Ripa in Rome (many thanks to Darleen Pryds on her insights on both these topics prior to our trip!). San Damiano, the Basilica of St. Clare, Santa Croce, visiting Br. Bill Short at St. Isadore college in Rome, and even looking for a monument to an incredible guy in Rome recommended by Fr. Tom Herbst by the name of San Telemacho.

Pace e Bene!

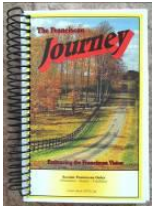
Laura Chun, OFS

A Taxing Reminder ☺

**If you need a letter detailing
your 2018 tax contributions
to the Fraternity, please
contact our Treasurer,
Eileen.**

Thanks!!!

Reminder from our Formation Director



Classes are held the Saturday before the meeting.
Please call Sandy for more information or visit our website [Formation](#) pages.

God Bless,
Sandy Baden, OFS
Director of Formation

Anniversaries of Profession



Apr. 10, 2005 Winnie
Apr. 22, 1961 Sr. Madeline
Apr. 24, 1994 Marta

Birthdays



April 9 Brenda
April 10 Sandy
April 14 Irene

Let us Pray for our brothers and sisters, especially:

- ❖ For the safety of Donna our Minister in all her journeys.
- ❖ For Pope Francis, Bishop Robert McElroy, and all Diocesan Bishops for all of our pastors, priests, deacons and consecrated religious, including those in lay orders and institutes.
- ❖ For the victims of war and terrorism throughout the world.
- ❖ For all of our brothers and sisters served by our fraternity's outreach program.
- ❖ All of our Fraternity members, especially: our council, our brothers and sisters who are in formation, our elderly and or homebound who aren't able come to our fraternity gatherings.
- ❖ Members of all three Orders of the Franciscan Family who need our prayers.



Memorials – please for all our members [Sister Death](#) has welcomed into Eternal Life, especially:



April 2, 1999 Cornelia Sussman
April 2, 2012 [Elaine Smith](#)
April 17, 2003 Nicholas Furticella
April 28, 2009 [Mary Gregush](#)

Last but definitely not least, please remember your donation envelope for the Common Fund.
The red box will be there for us.



Or mail to: Eileen



Fraternity Council



Minister
Donna Foley, OFS



Secretary
Newsletter Editor,
Carol Imhoff, OFS



Vice Minister
Karron Esmonde, OFS



Treasurer
Eileen Costa, OFS



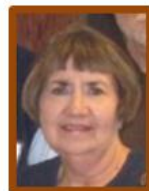
Formation Director
Sandy Baden, OFS



Councilor,
Webmaster
Laura Chun, OFS



Spiritual Assistant
Sr. Madeline Fitzgerald,
OSC



Councilor
Dorothy Mann, OFS